DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 076 689 TM 002 698

AUTHOR	Snyder, Fred A.; Melvin, Leland D.
TITLE	A Comparative Evaluation of an Experimental Program for Preparation of School Principals in Terms of Potential Placement.
INSTITUTION	Indiana State Univ., Terre Haute. School of Education.
PUB DATE	Feb 73
NOTE	10p.; Paper presented at annual meeting of American Educational Research Association (New Orleans, Louisiana, February 25-March 1, 1973)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*Administrator Education; *Administrator Selection; *Comparative Analysis; Experimental Programs; Interviews; *Job Placement; *Principals; Simulation; Technical Reports

ABSTRACT

The study focuses upon preparation programs of graduate students who aspire to become school principals. The design of the study is experimental with differing curriculum patterns for the principalship being the independent variable and potential placement of candidates the dependent variable. The method employed is unique inasmuch as controlled simulated interviews were utilized as a perceptual base for data collection. School officials viewing video recording of the simulated interviews indicated their perceptions of matched pair candidates seeking principal positions and who had differing curricular experiences. The method employed in the study could be adapted for similar purposes in other settings. (Author)

FORM 8510

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

ED 076689

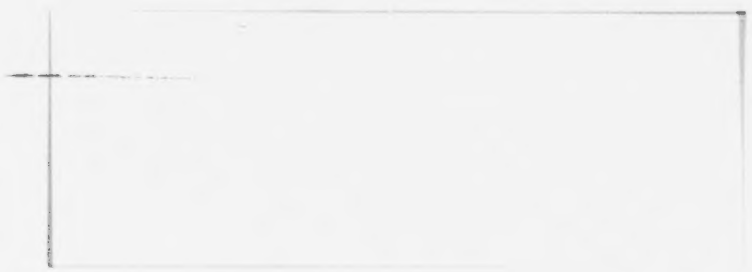
TM 002 698

Indiana State University

ISU

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA



Foreword

The School of Education of Indiana State University is proud to present under this cover the scholarly work of its professors. The search for truth and educational wisdom is truly one that involves all of us, and efforts such as these are testimonials to the strength and vigor of this search.

One of the marks of a true professional is a willingness to share the results of his work with others who are involved in this quest. The distribution of papers such as this is a confirmation of this professional ideal.

It is most important that the men and women engaged in the task of expanding the boundaries of scholarship in education understand that their efforts are understood and appreciated. This statement is a way of telling them that all of us are honored by their accomplishments.

David Turney, Dean

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY
TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA 47809

ED 076689

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

A COMPARATIVE EVALUATION OF AN EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAM FOR PREPARATION OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN TERMS OF POTENTIAL PLACEMENT

Fred A. Snyder and Leland D. Melvin

TM 002 398

Indiana State University
Terre Haute, Indiana

A Paper Presented to the Annual Meeting
of the
American Educational Research Association

February, 1973

A COMPARATIVE EVALUATION OF AN EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAM FOR PREPARATION OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN TERMS OF PLACEMENT ACCEPTABILITY

Fred A. Snyder and Leland D. Melvin
Indiana State University

Introduction

The early part of the present decade might well be called the era of transition for institutions of higher education in the United States. This is particularly true for colleges of education and even to a greater degree this is true, for educators of educational administrators within the colleges of education. The dynamic forces of society continue to make shifting demands upon educators and leaders of the public schools of today. The public continues to demand a better education for the children and youth. Yet there is a high level of disagreement as to any definition as to what might be "better." Thus, educators of educational administrators are given the challenge of providing experiences for promising individuals that will be fruitful in helping them to define and implement "better" educational programs in a variety of settings.

The problem is compounded by an important intervening variable of current placement opportunities for young educational administrators. Factors of supply and demand place institutions of higher education in the position of not only providing educational experiences directed toward the aim of improving educational practices, but just as important, they are placed in the position of producing a saleable product (graduate student certified as a public school administrator) which will be attractive on the "open market" of placement. There is reason to believe that throughout at least the present decade it will probably be even more competitive.

The Problem

Like faculty of other institutions of higher education, the faculty of educational administration at Indiana State University have been concerned with discovering ways and means which might prove beneficial in terms of improving administrative leadership in the public schools. With the assumption that the principalship role has potential for implementation of change through administrative leadership, Indiana State University initiated an experimental program directed toward the education of public school principals both at the elementary and secondary school level during the summer of 1970.

The focus of the present research was upon the evaluation of the experimental principal's program (experimental group) in comparison with the traditional program (control group) in terms of placement potentialities of participants. The dependent variable of placement potential was operationally defined as being selected by practicing school officials (individuals who hold positions which include the responsibility of recommending principals to be employed by boards of education in the public schools) when viewing a simulated video-taped interview.

Methodology of the Study

The research design was experimental in nature; however, the treatment variable of both the experimental and control groups was multi-dimensional consisting of differing educational experiences directed toward preparation for becoming public school attendance center principals.

The Control Group. Participants in this group came into a program which followed traditional patterns. Undergraduate grade point average and GRE scores were considered as admission requirements. Educational requirements

consisted of accumulation of a certain number of credit hours earned during summers, at extension centers off-campus, and evening-Saturday classes on campus. If the candidate maintained a 3.25 grade point average he was eligible to receive a provisional administrative certificate upon completion of the required credit hours.

The Experimental Group. The traditional admission requirements were ignored for this group. To be admitted to this program, a practicing school administrator had to identify and recommend the candidate. The practicing administrator further had to insure that the candidate would be afforded time for internship experiences, which amounted to three hours daily for an academic year. The academic work equivalent to the same number of credit hours as the traditional program was accomplished through two summers on campus and the intervening academic year internship experiences. While the administration classes on campus during summer showed some departure from traditional classes, the real strength of the program proved to be the internship experience during the academic year. Here the local school administrator, the University personnel and the candidate joined efforts to provide meaningful learning activities in school administration. In addition to daily internship activities, the candidates experienced monthly seminars which introduced them to a great variety of school administration phenomena. The maintenance of a certain GPA was not required, but the emphasis on grades seemed to lose out to concentration on the program. At the close of the program the candidate was eligible to hold the provisional administrative certificate.

Participants in the experimental and control groups were matched on the basis of the following variables: (1) age; (2) sex; (3) marital status; (4) graduate college hours in educational administration; (5) undergraduate index; (6) years of teaching experience; and (7) administrative aspirations.

At the end of the experimental period (one academic year and two summers) matched pairs were video taped in a simulated interview. The position simulated in the interview was that of principal (elementary or secondary) in Penn-Harris-Madison School Corporation, Mishawaka, Indiana. The interviewer for the video taped sessions was Dr. Dean Speicher, Superintendent of the Penn-Harris-Madison Schools. Dr. Speicher was not previously acquainted with any of the participants nor was he aware of which participants were associated with the experimental or control groups. The simulated interview time was controlled to 15 minutes for each interview.

The interviews of "candidates" were structured around the following questions:

1. What is your concept of the role of the principal? How do you plan to carry out the functions of the role as you have defined it?
2. What criteria would you use in evaluating an educational program?
3. What innovations would you like to make in a school if you had complete autonomy?
4. Discuss the manner in which you would consider a curriculum innovation or change suggested by a teacher. What questions would you ask? How would you expect the proposal to be prepared?
5. What do you consider the most effective approach for teacher evaluation?
6. What would be the thrust of your remarks at the first faculty meeting?
7. If you were directed by the Superintendent or his designee to "cut" the educational program and/or services in the (elementary-secondary) school that you administer because of school system financial difficulties, where would you begin and what would be reduced?
8. What does "due process of the law" mean?
9. Describe a behavioral objective.
10. Define a "well-disciplined" child.
11. How would you go about releasing a teacher who has been assigned for three (3) years to the building you administer who is "incompetent"?

12. How would you try to keep the public informed of the work of the school?

13. How would you go about collecting textbook rental fees?

14. How would you go about developing specifications for educational equipment?

15. What are your future goals or educational plans?

The interview candidates were given written instructions stating that they were applying for a position as principal in the Penn-Harris-Madison School Corporation. They were asked to respond to all questions as they would in a real interview situation. They were also told to feel free to ask any questions that they would ask in a real interview situation. In addition, the participants in the experimental group were told to not mention their intern experience during the interview.

The video taped interviews were viewed by nineteen (19) practicing hiring officials of public school corporations in the state of Indiana. Prior to viewing the simulated interviews the school officials were directed to: (1) consider the candidates in terms of pertinent administrative knowledge and relative personality traits; (2) check the candidate which would be most likely to be offered a principalship position in their school organization if a vacancy existed in the position for which the candidates were applying on forms provided by the investigators (control and experimental participants were presented alternatively on the basis of previously determined matched pairs. School officials were asked to check only one individual for each matched pair); and (3) not to check either candidate if they were personally acquainted with either candidate in any particular pair listed.

Findings

A total of 150 selections were made by the nineteen public school hiring officials. Participants in the control group were elected 63 times and participants in the experimental group were selected 87 times. Thus, control participants were selected 42% and experimental participants 58% of the total selections made.

Analysis of Data

The data collected were treated utilizing the chi square observing the results from those expected on the hypothesis of equal probability. The outcome of this analysis was a χ^2 of 3.84. Entering the χ^2 Table with one degree of freedom a greater than chance relationship between the treatment variables and placement selection was noted at the .05 level of confidence.

Conclusions

Even though the procedures followed in this investigation have many inherent limitations (matching of participants, small N, etc.) the fact that the evaluative process was based upon a simulated process which closely resembles employment practices seems to justify the procedures followed. Admittedly, the investigation was limited to the extent that the observing hiring officials' perception was valid and reliable; however, it seems reasonable to assume that in the real world of placement this is the way "the game" is played.

This investigation incorporated an important dimension of preparing principals to serve in the public schools, namely, obtaining the position upon the basis of their collegiate experiences. The procedures followed were designed to eliminate bias on the part of those who germinated and implemented an experimental preparation program for public school principals.

The findings of the study seem to indicate that principalship candidates who have educational experiences included in the experimental program at Indiana State University are more likely to be hired than candidates who have educational experiences included in the more traditional program. If it has done nothing else, this investigation has illustrated a mode of collegiate program evaluation which might lead to program improvement in the public schools. Those associated with preparing principals at Indiana State University believe they now know more about needed program experiences than they did two years ago. There is much more that we do not know and that we now know we need to know. This study has been but a small step in an attempt to uncover some of this needed knowledge.